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Can the Afghans Go It Alone?

Opinion

Editor's Note

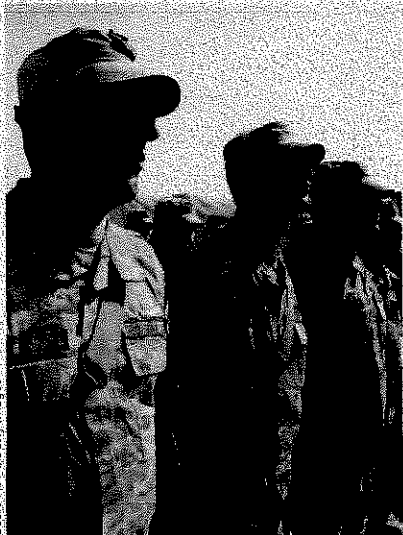
Afghan leader Hamid Karzai has told the United States to pull back and go home sooner than planned. Should we? As if our strained relationship with that fragile country were not bad enough, a U.S. soldier apparently lost his mind and slaughtered a group of Afghan civilians this week. Just after NATO personnel burned a pile of Korans. Maybe the erratic Karzai has a point. This is a bad situation that will only spawn worse outcomes. Is it time to pack up and let the Afghans solve their own problems? The British and the Russians deemed it an ungovernable, unsecurable country and marched out. It's tempting to follow their lead. Or, do we still have a national security interest in keeping the deeply troubled nation relatively stable? I'd like to hear your thoughts at editor@usnews.com.

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By Brian Kelly

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## STAYING POWER?

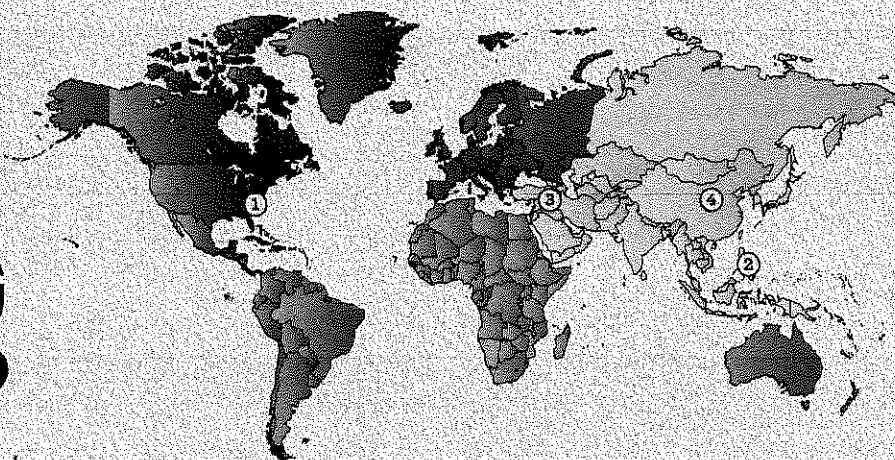
① **WASHINGTON, D.C.**—The United States plans to draw down most of its 90,000 troops in Afghanistan by 2014. But then what? In a recent pact, the United States agreed to provide the war-torn nation with military and financial support until 2024. If approved by Congress, funding will aid Afghan forces and help support economic growth and education efforts. In addition, the United States vowed not to launch attacks on other countries from Afghanistan. The United States and allied troops invaded Afghanistan in 2001 because its government was harboring Osama bin Laden, the Al Qaeda leader responsible for the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States. U.S. and Afghan leaders negotiated for more than a year to reach the agreement, which still must be signed by U.S. President Barack Obama and Afghan President Hamid Karzai.



## “QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“People say, ‘Oh, the poor thing.’ But he wakes up happy every day. He doesn’t know he’s different.”

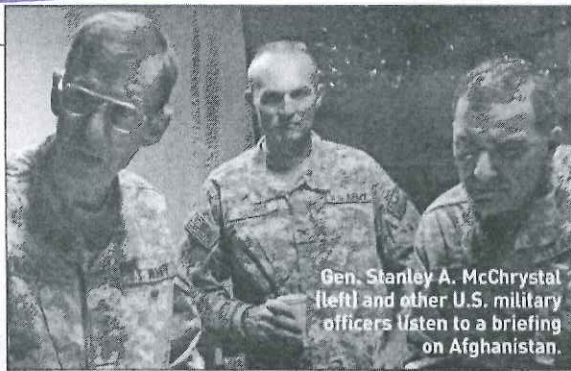
—Stephanie Fox about her disabled pooch, Roosevelt, who uses a custom-built cart to get around in Portland, Maine



## Fab Crab

② **Palawan, Philippines**—Finding this purple crustacean was anything but a piece of (crab) cake. The newly discovered *Insulamon palawanense* lives under rocks and roots in streams on the island of Palawan, venturing out only at night. Still, researchers recently managed to catch the colorful critter and three related crab species red-handed. All four crustaceans were previously unknown to science. The crabs’ bright hues sent scientists scurrying for their cameras. The puny pinchers are 1 to 2 inches wide and bright purple, with splashes of red on their claws and legs. Researchers say the crabs’ vibrant colors may attract mates. “Crabs can discriminate colors,” Hendrik Freitag of the Senckenberg Museum of Zoology in Germany told the AFP. “Therefore, it seems likely that the coloration has a signal function for ... social behavior.”





Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal (left) and other U.S. military officers listen to a briefing on Afghanistan.

Zuma/Newscom

## SEND MORE TROOPS?

**KABUL, Afghanistan**—Afghan President Hamid Karzai agrees that more U.S. troops are needed to win the war in Afghanistan. He recently told CNN that sending more troops is "the right approach ... and we back it." In a top-secret report recently leaked to the press, Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, the commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, warned that more troops must be sent to the Middle Eastern country within the year or the eight-year war there "will likely result in failure." The United States has about 68,000 troops in Afghanistan. The Pentagon plans to add 6,000 troops by year's end, but U.S. president Barack Obama has not yet said whether he will send more troops as a result of McChrystal's report.

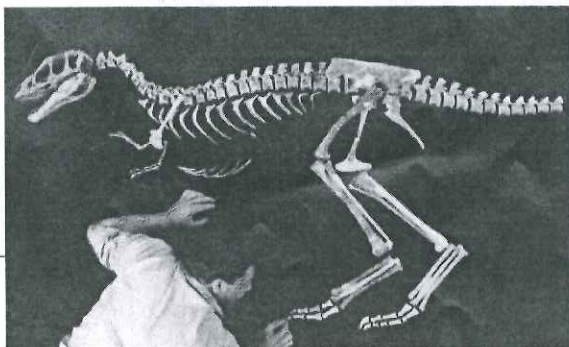
## TINY T. REX

### Northeastern China—

The discovery of the remains of a pint-size relative of the *Tyrannosaurus rex* in China was a big surprise for paleontologists. The dino, nicknamed "Raptorex," was about 9 feet long and weighed about 150 pounds. The average *T. rex* was a whopping 40 feet long and weighed about 5 tons. (See their skulls compared above.) But the two creatures had a lot in common, including short arms, long legs, and big heads. What's most exciting to scientists, however, is that the diminutive dino lived about 60 million years before *T. rex*. "That's what's so surprising about the whole thing," says Paul Sereno, one of the scientists who recently published a study on Raptorex. "From tooth to limbs ... we see things we used to think were just exclusive to the big tyrannosaurids in the late Cretaceous. But there they are."



AFP Photo/AAAS/Paul Sereno/Newscom



Mike Hettwer

## TALK BACK



**Dear Current Events,**  
I think that banning kids from clubs and sports if they are failing classes is wrong ["Making the Grade," issue 2]. We should be happy that kids are doing sports. ... So many people—kids especially—are overweight. ... Being in clubs and sports would most likely keep kids out of trouble and prevent them from doing drugs and drinking alcohol.

—Valerie, CE blogger

### Dear CE,

If you get onto a sports team and then you start to fail a class, you should be sidelined [from sports and clubs] until you can get your grades back up. In our school, if we are failing two or more classes, we are sidelined

from sports until [we get] our grades back up. ... It does not sound fair, but it really is.

—Brittany M., New York

### Dear CE,

By the time you are in middle school, you should be able to keep track of your homework load and [decide] whether you could be committed to the team. A [solution] would be to have each student and his or her parent sign a paper [saying that] the student can really commit to the sport and control the homework load and grades too.

—Skye S., Maryland

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[edce@weeklyreader.com](mailto:edce@weeklyreader.com).  
**Check out the blog too:**  
[www.cenewsblog.com](http://www.cenewsblog.com).



## CARTOON OF THE WEEK



Drew Stanton, Stan Leger/TMS

**WORLD TRAVELER:** The new H1N1 virus, which causes swine flu, has been an unwelcome guest around the world. What point is the cartoonist trying to make about the flu and its spread?

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